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FOR SCA/CEN (PERRY)
ANKARA FOR AGRICULTURE COUNSELOR JAMES HIGGISTON
TASHKENT FOR ESTH (PUTNAM)

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: EAGR ETRD PGOV KFLU TX
SUBJECT: AVIAN FLU: TURKMENISTAN SIGNS KABUL DECLARATION
ON CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

REFTEL: A) ASHGABAT 385 AND PREVIOUS
 B) 05 STATE 153802

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Distribution.

¶1. (U) AT AN APRIL 17-20 REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN KABUL
DEDICATED TO CONTAGIOUS DISEASES AND ORGANIZED BY USAID
AND WHO, TURKMENISTAN'S DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH AND
MEDICAL INDUSTRY (MOHMI) BASHIM SOPIYEV SIGNED A REGIONAL
DECLARATION TO FIGHT AGAINST CHOLERA, HIV/AIDS, MALARIA,
POLIO, TUBERCULOSIS AND AVIAN INFLUENZA (AI).
AFGHANISTAN, IRAN, PAKISTAN, TAJIKISTAN, IRAQ, AND TURKEY
ALSO SIGNED THE DECLARATION, WHICH FOCUSED ON INFORMATION
SHARING, IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE PEOPLE, AND PREPARING
GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES TO CURB CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.
THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED NEWSPAPER NEUTRALNYI TURKMENISTAN
REPORTED ON THE DECLARATION IN AN APRIL 26 FRONT-PAGE
ARTICLE.

¶2. (SBU) Deputy Director of State Veterinary Service
Hudaiberdy Muhammedov told Pol/Econ Asst on May 2 that
the MOHMI asked the State Veterinary Service to nominate
a candidate to attend the Kabul conference, but the MOHMI
held the invitation until the last moment so the
Veterinary Service nominee did not have time to get a
visa. (Note: The State Veterinary Service maintains the
national AI reference library. End Note.) As a result,
only MOHMI representatives attended the conference.

Comment

¶3. (SBU) The MOHMI took full control over Turkmenistan's
epidemiological monitoring in 2005, and since that time
MOHMI has created numerous obstacles for the Veterinary
Service which hinder its epidemiological monitoring. The
Kabul conference invitation is thus par for the course.

Local observers believe the GOTX attended the conference and signed the declaration to counter international criticism for avoiding regional cooperation in the past. Local observers and embassy doubt the GOTX will follow through on its declaration commitments of greater transparency and information sharing. End Comment.

JACOBSON